

Spark Gap

Volume 23, Issue 6, June 2006



MARC at White River Township Strawberry Fest

...Jack Parker, W8ISH

Five members of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club participated last weekend at the White River Township Strawberry Fest.

Brenda Halder, Dave Dailey, Marc Snell, Bob LaGrange and Jack Parker spent the day talking to visitors about

the fun and benefits of Amateur Radio.

Several other club members stopped by to add their support. Our club banner was on the Johnson County Emergency Communications Van (Emcomm) and acted as guides for the new vehicle. (See photo taken by Jack Parker.)

Missing this year from the event was club member and past president Ernest Clark, KB9SKI, who recently moved to the Lafayette area. Several firefighters were asking where he was. Ernest was also missed because of the multitude of equipment he normally would provide. Except for handhelds, Jack Parker was the only amateur to bring along radios, coax and antennas. Time for the club to get more involved on the equipment and HF side of Amateur radio.

While at the Strawberry Fest, Jack was concerned about the high SWR on the radio and mast mounted antenna. The crew took the head liner off above the door of the Ecomm van and found a bad ground on one of the connectors where the short wall mounted coax was connected to the longer coax running to the mast.

APRS is now working perfectly. Jack bought a 6-inch serial port connector at the Dayton Hamfest to complete the project. He also installed a newer version of MMSSTV, the slow scan TV program.

Tug Sutton, our Johnson County EM Director, was impressed that Brenda got the weather display working and programmed. Good job, Brenda! In addition to talking to folks about amateur radio, repairing and updating equipment, learning how the van works, the crew also kept an eye on developing weather conditions. All in all a good opportunity to spotlight who we are and what we do.

Current Events!

Upcoming Events

If you didn't make the Strawberry Fest you still have many opportunities to participate in the summer activities. The Emcomm van and MARC will be at the Greenwood Arts and Craft Fair in June. There are still several triathlon races in Indianapolis, IN over the next couple of months.

July will have opportunities at the Hoosier 200 bicycle race and don't forget the Indianapolis Communication & Technology Expo on July 8th. September will include the Greenwood Band Invitational so get your gear and get to one of these events and show what amateur radio has to offer.

Check out the club website for more information on these events and to find out how to sign up and volunteer.

*The Official
Newsletter of the
Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club*



Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Franklin, IN 46131
www.midstatehams.org

Second Annual “Take Your Handheld to Work Day” Set for June 20

NEWINGTON, CT, Jun 14, 2006—The ARRL appears to have struck a chord in 2005 when it initiated “Take Your Handheld to



Accessorize your office Tuesday, June 20, and show off Amateur Radio to your co-workers.

Work Day.” Radio amateurs who participated last year report they were able to introduce many new people to Amateur Radio. Whether any of those co-workers became hams themselves as a result isn’t known, but this simple activity offers a great opportunity to demonstrate and describe Amateur Radio to others and to talk up its ben-

efits. So, the League is doing it again this year.

“On Tuesday, June 20, we encourage every ham radio operator across the country who owns a handheld transceiver to take their little radios to work if they can,” says ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP. “By wearing it on their belt, setting it on a desk or just making your radio visible, the goal is to have co-workers ask, ‘What’s that?’ In this way, the hams will be able to share about the fun they have with Amateur Radio.”

Pitts encourages hams not only to show the capabilities of their handheld radios, but to invite co-workers to actually give them a try — under the licensee’s supervision, of course — as the Amateur Radio rules allow.

“This is a great way to begin and also invite your friends and co-workers to come and see a full station in field operation the next weekend during ARRL Field Day 2006 on June 24-25,” Pitts says.

Although Amateur Radio is mainly fun, it is called a radio service because it also has a serious side. The FCC supports the Amateur

Radio Service because of its value in providing emergency communication, contributing “to the advancement of the radio art,” expanding the pool of “trained operators, technicians and electronics experts,” and to enhance international goodwill.

“This philosophy has paid off,” Pitts notes. “Countless lives have been saved where skilled hobbyists act as emergency communicators to render aid, whether it’s during a tsunami in India or a hurricane right here in the US.”

A heads up: On June 20 between noon and 1 PM in your local time zone, be on the lookout for surprise messages from ARRL. By using modern digital radio technology, EchoLink and a few other tricks, random participants from locations around the country might be spotted on the air by W1AW and win a prize.

“Take Your Handheld to Work Day” is a chance to have a lot of fun, recruit new hams,

invite people to Field Day, get publicity and show off Amateur Radio,” Pitts points out. “Many people would like to have the capabilities of ham radio in a crisis, but don’t know where to start. The best recruiter is another ham. I hope you have fun and make the most of it!”

For more information about

Amateur Radio or to learn how you can earn your own Amateur Radio license, visit the ARRL “Hello” Web site.

HT's to Work!



Handheld to work: ARRL Assistant Editor Khristyne Keane, K1SFA, shows how it's done.

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SKYWARN Volunteers Receive NOAA Environmental Hero Award

NEWINGTON, CT, May 30, 2006—South Florida SKYWARN Coordinator Don Morris, KG4JHH, of Miami, and his South Florida SKYWARN team have received a 2006 NOAA Environmental Hero Award for outstanding volunteer service during the 2005 hurricane season.

Morris and his SKYWARN team volunteered more than 100 hours to staff Amateur Radio station WX4MIA, located at the NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Office in Miami. The volunteers gathered real-time hurricane damage and weather reports, disseminated NWS information and warnings and verified NWS warnings with on-the-spot information.

Along with other SKYWARN volunteers and even family members, Morris kept the WX4MIA severe weather net in constant operation as Hurricane Katrina moved ashore near Hallandale Beach and then southwest across Miami-Dade County. He did the same thing for Hurricane Wilma, staying all night right through landfall around 6 AM in Collier County and through noon when Wilma finally moved off the Palm Beach County coastline near Jupiter.

Over the years, NOAA said, Morris has volunteered hundreds of hours as “the voice” of WX4MIA, soliciting storm reports and disseminating the latest warnings and statements for hurricanes and severe storms. Established in 1995 and given annually in conjunction with Earth Day, the Environmental Hero Award is presented to individuals and organizations volunteering their time and energy to help NOAA carry out its mission. NOAA Administrator Conrad C. Lautenbacher said, “The dedicated efforts and outstanding accomplishments of these award winners greatly benefit the environment and make our nation a better place for all Americans.”—NOAA; Evelyn Gauzens, W4WYR

Recent VEC Results

May 2006

Michael Achors KC9QNT, Technician

Kevin Blum, KC9JOU, Technician

Congratulations!

“The intent of the award is to recognize all of us who have worked on SKYWARN and/or WX4MIA,” said Morris, who accepted the plaque during a May 22 presentation. “Local Amateur Radio is the main infrastructure we depend on for SKYWARN. It is way cool to be part of it.” Morris also credited those who filed reports by telephone, Internet or fax or who have “just been ready if needed.” ■

Dayton Hamvention 2006 attendance nearly even with last year’s (Jun 9, 2006)

Dayton Hamvention® 2006 General Chairman Jim Nies, WX8F, reports that the estimated attendance for the May 19-21 event was very nearly the same as last year’s. “Our best estimates for attendance at 2006 Hamvention put the number at 20,324, a slight drop from 2005, but still within the ballpark for the three latest all-volunteer Hamvention years,”

Nies told ARRL. In 2005, an ARRL Convention year, 20,411 visitors attended Hamvention. The number of attendees in 2004 was calculated at 19,869. Nies said the Dayton Amateur Radio Association’s Hamvention Committee will conduct a critique meeting June 13 to identify areas of Hamvention that need improvement and to discuss possible solutions, although Nies says that process already has begun informally. “Some committee chairmen have begun planning their timelines and their recruiting for next year,” he adds. ■

Note: Jack Parker, Bob LaGrange, and Brenda Haler attended Dayton this year.

**WA9RDF
Repeater
146.835/
146.235 MHz
151.4 Hz PL
Tone**

**Weekly Net
Every Sunday
at 7PM EST**

***Tune in to hear
the ARRL
Newsline!***

Weekly Net

Make sure to check out our weekly net, held every Sunday at 1900 (7 PM) local time. This is a great chance to meet other local amateur radio operators and test your operating skills. Newline is often played, allowing net participants to get the latest news about the amateur radio hobby. For those without the license or means to check in over the air, we offer an email check-in. Just send an email with your name and contact information to netcontrol@midstatehams.org and we will record your check-in!



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2006 Schedule of Events

Public Service Events and/or Educational/Testing Opportunities

JUNE 2006

17 **MARC Meeting**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

24 **Greenwood Arts & Crafts Fair/MARC Field Day**

The park just north of the Greenwood Library on Madison Avenue, Greenwood, IN. We will be next to the Johnson County Emergency Van

24 **June Sprint Triathalon**

Indianapolis, IN (Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, www.indyhams.org for more info)

24-25 **Red Cross Disaster Radio Group - Marion County Field Day**

56th & Post Road, Indianapolis, IN

JULY 2006

8 **Indianapolis Communications & Technology Expo**

Camp Sertoma, US Hwy 52 East at German Church Road, Indianapolis, IN

11 **Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**

Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN

15 **MARC Meeting**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

15-16 **Hoosier Hills 200**

200 Mile Bike Race from Evansville to Lake Monroe

29 **July Sprint Triathalon**

Indianapolis, IN (Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, www.indyhams.org for more info)

AUGUST 2006

8 **Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**

Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN

19 **MARC Meeting**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

19 **August Sprint Triathalon**

Indianapolis, IN (Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, www.indyhams.org for more info)

27 **Mideast Triathalon**

Indianapolis, IN (Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, www.indyhams.org for more info)

SEPTEMBER 2006

12 **Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**

Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN

16 **MARC Meeting**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

23 **Greenwood High School Marching Band Invitational**

Greenwood, IN (Contact Bob LaGrange, N9SIU, for more info)

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.